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ABSTRACT

The Leadership and Service Programs office at Ball State University in Indiana started the Excellence in Leadership Program in 1994. Funding for three years was secured from the Kellogg Foundation to develop a comprehensive leadership program that would be run by the student activities staff in cooperation with Academic Affairs. After the grant period expired, the university funded the program. Although the program is administered by a student affairs office, involvement with faculty, the University College, and the community is essential to the program's success. Excellence in Leadership is a 4-phase, 4-year program that develops students, using three leadership theories: situational, ethical or principle centered, and servant leadership. Phase 1 focuses on confidence and self esteem; phase 2 focuses on involvement and student organizations; phase 3 focuses on servant leadership and volunteerism on campus and in the larger community; and phase 4 connects students with their future professions and leadership outside the university. The Excellence in Leadership program uses mentoring, workshops, local and national speakers, a Leadership Resource Center, retreats, and individual projects to teach leadership skills. Such programs are common and generally effective. Student affairs administrators seek to educate students while giving them quality co-curricular opportunities. (NKA)

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Leadership Programs Across the Campus: Who's Teaching What From Where?

The Student Affairs – Administered Program

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Ball State University's EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Leadership and Service Programs office at Ball State University started the Excellence in Leadership Program in 1994. Funding for three years was secured from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to develop a comprehensive leadership program that would be run by the student activities staff in cooperation with Academic Affairs. After the grant period, the University funded the program at approximately $50,000 per year. Although the program is administered by a student affairs office, involvement with faculty, the University College and the community is essential to the programs success.

The primary goals of the Excellence in Leadership program are to:

1) create opportunities for individuals to gain confidence in their own abilities and learn skills and ethics needed to help groups progress and achieve goals;
2) increase the interaction between faculty/staff and students through co-curricular opportunities; and
3) provide students an opportunity for leadership on campus and prepare students for citizenship and community involvement after college.

Excellence in Leadership is a four phase, four-year program that develops students using three leadership theories. The leadership theories are Situational, Ethical or Principled Centered, and Servant Leadership. Phase I focuses on confidence and self-esteem. Phase II focuses on involvement and student organizations. Phase III focuses on servant leadership and volunteerism on campus in the larger community, and finally, Phase IV connect students with their future professions and leadership outside the university. Students can enter without an interview as a first year student and exit the program when they choose. For a student to enter the program without having

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completed Phase I requires an interview and selection process. The program has a 50% retention rate from phase to phase. Retention of students involved in the program is 96-100%. Students report increased confidence, involvement, creative thinking, understanding of leadership styles, ability to work with others, and improved communication skills. The campus has seen increased involvement as a result of the program.

The Excellence in Leadership program uses mentoring, workshops, local and national speakers, a Leadership Resource Center, retreats, and individual projects to teach leadership skills. Faculty are involved in the program through mentoring breakout groups and developing courses with a leadership segment. An Excellence in Leadership Teaching Award encourages new and innovative pedagogical techniques to link academic disciplines and development.

Student Affairs-Administered Programs in General

Student Affairs – Administered programs are as diverse as the campuses they serve. Students are exposed to speakers, workshops, movies, literature [fiction and non-fiction], case studies, mentoring, current events, etc. to encourage thought and discussion about leadership issues. Programs require reflection, writing, public speaking, peer discussion, community service projects, outdoor and indoor activities, and involvement in student organizations to practice leadership. Programs are on-campus and off, long-term, weekends or a single day, general to all students or specific to another area of growth [e.g. Campus Ministries/leadership programs], and focused on different leadership theories. Most student affairs programs are a combination of all these activities and change over time with the increased emphasis on leadership training at the High School level. Most programs involve many members of the student affairs staff as well as other units on campus. The same as other parts of campus the programs are growing so rapidly and are in demand from students that students affairs administrators are striving to keep programs fresh and innovative.

Advantages of a Student Affairs - Administered Program

There are several advantages or reasons to house leadership in a student affairs - administered program.

First, student affairs is inclusive to the campus community. Student involvement in leadership education is not confused by the program being housed within a discipline, which may not be their focus, or perceptions of professional development opportunities in a discipline. In addition, class rank can be removed as an obstacle for taking a class with a perceived class status (e.g. 100 level course for first year students, or 400 level course for upper-class students). Although, the Excellence in Leadership program has this same perception to overcome in relation to class rank.

Student Affairs professionals are experts in student development and student development theories. Recognizing that students need different information as a first year student, than they do as a senior, allows for the student to learn leadership skills as they develop as students and personally.

Student Affairs co-curricular opportunities offer the means to practice leadership on campus. Involvement opportunities in clubs, organizations, or student government are often housed within the student affairs division and offer students a direct link to leadership opportunities. Receiving information about leadership, then practicing, is crucial to the retention of leadership skills. In addition, students who are involved in clubs and organizations have a direct link to advisors who can work with students individually to develop better leadership skills. These types of opportunities are where students look when they think of leadership on campus.

Finally, since student affairs offices are often asked to recruit students for leadership and involvement it seems logical to house the program within a student affairs division. This provides the most direct link to involvement, recruitment and education.

Summary

Student affairs leadership programs are common and generally effective. Student affairs administrators seek to educate students while giving them quality co-curricular opportunities. Students see a direct connection with leadership programs housed within student affairs because of campus leadership opportunities being readily available, but unfortunately take the programs less seriously than a class or work. Student affairs professionals are often overworked and feel unsupported as educators on campus.

Since student affairs programs are so diverse on our nation's campuses the opportunity for them to grow and expand is evident. Student affairs programs will be continued as long as the demand from incoming students persists. If the interest in leadership programs wanes then the leadership training will most likely continue in more specific interest training.